

real person. What he says is true. He doesn't speak in long paragraphs or long treatises because he doesn't have to. He gets straight to the point. He is a man of few words because he doesn't have to equivocate, doesn't have to qualify, doesn't have to dissemble. He just gets straight to the point.

I have found that in my relationship with that wonderful man, JIM JEFFORDS. We work together on the Environment and Public Works Committee. Time and time again he turns to me, defers to me, and says: Max, whatever you want to do, that is fine with me.

I know that he is also saying: Just keep me informed of what you are doing. And I do. It is a wonderful personal relationship. We know each other. We trust each other eminently, immediately. We don't have to ask questions such as: What do you really mean? We don't question assumptions. We just know.

That is JIM JEFFORDS.

It has been said that he believes strongly in a few issues, and he does. The environment certainly is one. There are other issues in which my friend from Vermont believes. If you will pardon the overworked phrase, one might possibly disagree with JIM, but he does so in such an agreeable manner that you don't know that there is really a disagreement.

It has been said on the floor of the Senate not too long ago that it is hard to name a Senator who could walk into a restaurant and get the same applause, stand-up applause, as JIM JEFFORDS has so many times around this country.

It is true, he does and he did. It is because people recognize his intestinal fortitude. It took a lot of courage for him to decide he was, after all, an Independent and not a Republican. It was a very difficult decision. But he did it. He did it on the basis of principle. People know that. They see that. They sense that, and they understand that. That is why they stand and applaud JIM JEFFORDS. It is not just the United States, it is in other cities around the world, where people would stand up and applaud when the U.S. Senator from Vermont would walk into the room. In his usual way, JIM would be very humble about it, and it would not go to his head. He would not take it seriously. Obviously, it was not something he disagreed with, but it didn't go to his head.

I am hard-pressed to think of any man I know who is as wonderful as my good friend and colleague from Vermont. I am sad to see him retire. The Senate needs more people like Senator JEFFORDS. I hope whoever replaces him as Senator from Vermont is in the mold of JIM JEFFORDS.

I yield the floor.

OBSERVANCE OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the victims and commemorate

the 90th anniversary of the tragic Armenian Genocide, where over 1.5 million Armenian men, women and children were systematically killed, and over 500,000 Armenians were displaced. This was the first genocide of the 20th century, and one where the international community failed to intervene to stop the killing.

We have learned a great deal since those dark days. We learned that the world cannot sit on the sidelines as systematic massacres of innocents take place. We learned that the rule of law must be upheld, and that violations of law must have consequences. And, we learned that the Armenian people are a strong, proud and persevering people who could not be defeated. Today, hundreds of thousands of Armenian Americans live in the United States, and I am proud to represent a thriving Armenian-American population—3,000 strong—in Nevada.

But we must never forget the painful lessons learned from the Armenian Genocide. This week, events around my State and the Nation will recognize this important anniversary. I am grateful for the strong and active work of the Armenian-American community in Las Vegas, who will hold their annual commemoration on April 24. To the Armenian American Cultural Society of Las Vegas and to the work of Mr. John Dadaian, I say thank you for all that you have done for the people of Nevada, and Armenia.

I am also proud of the fine work done by the University of Nevada's Center of Holocaust, Genocide and Peace Studies to inform the public about the horrors of the Armenian Genocide. Raising awareness and educating today's generations about the horrors of genocide is crucial for a safer, more peaceful future. That is why I was so proud to join my friend and colleague, Senator ENSIGN, in cosponsoring a resolution commemorating the signing of the Genocide Convention.

The people of Armenia suffered greatly during the 20th century. We cannot allow genocide to occur ever again. So today I come to the Senate floor to honor the victims of the Armenian Genocide and pledge to uphold their sacrifice by standing against genocide and the systematic killing of innocents wherever it may occur again.

NATIVE AMERICAN APOLOGY RESOLUTION

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about a joint resolution that seeks to address an issue that has lain unresolved for far too long. That issue is our Nation's relationship with the Native peoples of this land.

Long before 1776 and the establishment of the United States of America, this land was inhabited by numerous nations. Like our Nation, many of these peoples held a strong belief in the Creator and maintained a powerful spiritual connection to this land. Since

the formation of the American Republic, there have been numerous conflicts between our Government and many of these tribes conflicts in which warriors on all sides fought courageously and in which all sides suffered. However, even from the earliest days of the Republic, there existed a sentiment that honorable dealings and peaceful coexistence were preferable to bloodshed. Indeed, our predecessors in Congress in 1787 stated in the Northwest Ordinance, "The utmost good faith shall always be observed toward the Indians."

Many treaties were made between this Republic and the American Indian tribes. Treaties, as my colleagues in this Chamber know, are far more than words on a page. Treaties are our word, our bond. Treaties with other governments are not to be treated lightly. Unfortunately, too often the United States of America did not uphold its responsibilities as stated in its covenants with the Native American tribes. Too often our Government broke its oaths to the Native peoples.

I want my fellow Senators to know that the resolution I have introduced this week does not dismiss the valiance of our American soldiers who bravely fought for their families in wars between the United States and a number of the Indian tribes. Nor does this resolution cast all the blame for the various battles on one side or another. What this resolution does do is recognize and honor the importance of Native Americans to this land and to our Nation in the past and today—and offers an official apology to the Native peoples for the poor and painful choices our Government sometimes made to disregard its solemn word.

This is a resolution of apology and a resolution of reconciliation. It is a first step toward healing the wounds that have divided us for so long—a potential foundation for a new era of positive relations between tribal governments and the Federal Government. It is time—it is past time—for us to heal our land of division, all divisions, and bring us together as one people.

Before reconciliation, there must be recognition and repentance. Before there is a durable relationship, there must be understanding. This resolution will not authorize or serve as a settlement of any claim against the United States, nor will it resolve the many challenges still facing Native peoples. But it does recognize the negative impact of numerous deleterious Federal acts and policies on Native Americans and their cultures. Moreover, it begins the effort of reconciliation by recognizing past wrongs and repenting for them.

Martin Luther King, a true reconciler, once said, "The end is reconciliation, the end is redemption, the end is the creation of the beloved community." This resolution is not the end. But, perhaps it signals the beginning of the end of division and the faint first light and first fruits of the creation of beloved community.